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ABSTRACT

This guide, quite specific to one institution, was developed as a companion document to the University of Alabama Libraries Tenure Document. It interprets and supplements the University of Alabama "Faculty Handbook" requirements for promotion. Some of the differences in performance and effectiveness between regular teaching faculty and librarians are addressed. Appropriate research, publication, creative activity, and scholarly achievement are outlined in detail for each rank. General remarks suggest appropriate timing for application for promotion to a potential candidate. The "Timeline for Promotion and Tenure" was prepared to more adequately reflect the time needed for the process of promotion and its calendar overlap with the tenure process. "Documentation for Promotion" serves as a checklist for the promotion dossier. An appropriate format to use in requesting letters of support for a promotion candidate is suggested in the document "Request for Promotion Support Letters." "Suggested Promotion Committee Procedures" is an outline of the process and timeline of the promotion committee, which is initiated when the personnel officer receives a promotion candidate's dossier. (Author/MAS)

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Promotion Guidelines for Academic Librarians at the University of Alabama: Criteria and Procedures

by Donna R. Hogan

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Promotion Guidelines for Academic Librarians at the University of Alabama: Criteria and Procedures

Donna R. Hogan

Criteria and Standards for Promotion was developed as a companion document to the University of Alabama Libraries Tenure Document. It interprets and supplements the University of Alabama Faculty Handbook requirements for promotion and is approved by the libraries faculty, dean, and provost of the university.

This document addresses some of the differences in performance and effectiveness between regular teaching faculty and librarians. Appropriate research, publication, creative activity, and scholarly achievement are outlined in detail for each rank. General remarks suggest appropriate timing for application for promotion to a potential candidate.

The dossier, including supporting documents, represents the candidate for promotion. Its importance cannot be over-emphasized. The dossier must be clear, complete, well-documented, and well-organized. *Documentation for Promotion* serves as a checklist for the promotion dossier. Here, the candidate is provided with appropriate sections of the Faculty Handbook, and an explanation of each of the items listed in the contents of the dossier. Where possible, the appropriate procedures and responsibilities are specified in order to clarify the process.

Timeline for Promotion and Tenure was prepared to more adequately reflect the time needed for the process of promotion and its calendar overlap of the tenure process. This document is specific to the Libraries and agrees with the Timeline published in the Faculty Handbook.

The fourth document, *Request for Promotion Support Letters*, suggests an appropriate format to use in requesting letters of support for a candidate for promotion. The type of request, with the enclosures indicated, will both assist the requestor and elicit a timely response from the references.

The University of Alabama Libraries Faculty Organization Promotion Committee is defined in its Bylaws. *Suggested Promotion Committee Procedures* is an outline of the process and timeline of the promotion committee, which is initiated when the personnel officer receives a promotion candidate's dossier. The document reflects current practice and is subject to adjustment, depending upon the number and rank of the candidates for promotion.

Libraries Faculty Organization Promotion Guidelines Committee: Donna R. Hogan (Chair), Karen Chapman, Sharon Stewart, Clark Center, Ann Power, and Cheryl Taranto.

Appendix

1. Criteria and Standards for Promotion
2. Timeline for Promotion and Tenure
3. Documentation for Promotion
4. Request for Promotion Support Letters
5. Promotion Committee definition
6. Suggested Promotion Committee Procedures

Criteria and Standards for Promotion

A faculty member usually completes at least four years in rank before being considered for promotion from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor or from Associate Professor to Professor; consequently, candidates normally do not apply for promotion before their fifth year in rank. Many librarians enter the university at the instructor level, however. If appropriate academic credentials and performance can be demonstrated, the librarian at the instructor rank is encouraged to apply for promotion sooner than the fifth year.

A. Promotion from Instructor to Assistant Professor

To merit promotion to the rank of Assistant Professor, candidates must possess a strong record of performance at the Instructor rank.

1. A successful candidate must present convincing evidence of good performance and effectiveness as a librarian; each candidate's record must be judged sufficient in quality to demonstrate continuing and substantial progress toward an outstanding level of performance.

The candidate should be a fully contributing member of the department.

2. A successful candidate must present a record of research, publication, creative activity, and scholarly achievement appropriate to his/her discipline and fields of specialization; this record must be sufficient in both quantity and quality to demonstrate the potential for progress toward an outstanding level of performance.

The Faculty Handbook provides many examples of appropriate types of scholarly and professional contributions (p. 21). Contributions at this rank may be made at the local, state, regional or national levels. The candidate should provide evidence of beginning a record in one or more of the following, or a combination:

a. Presentation of papers at conferences, workshops, etc.

b. Service as a contributing member of an appropriate professional or scholarly association.

c. Publication of articles in appropriate journals or newsletters.

Note: The term "local" does not include programs, organizations, or publications sponsored by the University of Alabama Libraries; these contributions usually are regarded as citizenship.

3. Each successful candidate must show evidence of a continuing record of responsible academic citizenship appropriate to the candidate's area.

B. Promotion from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor

To merit promotion to the rank of Associate Professor, candidates must possess a strong record of performance at the Assistant Professor rank.

1. A successful candidate must present convincing evidence of good performance and effectiveness as a librarian; each candidate's record must be judged sufficient in quality to demonstrate continuing and substantial progress toward an outstanding level of performance.

The candidate should provide evidence of leadership in strengthening or improving library service. Examples include, but are not limited to, developing new policy or procedures, introducing or adapting information technologies to enhance access to information, initiating new types of service.

2. A successful candidate must present a strong, continuing record of productive research, publication, creative activity, and scholarly achievement appropriate to his/her discipline and fields of specialization; this record must be sufficient in both quantity and quality to demonstrate substantial progress toward an outstanding level of performance.

The Faculty Handbook provides many examples of appropriate types of scholarly and professional contributions (p. 21). Contributions at this rank should be at the regional or national level. The candidate should provide evidence of a strong, continuing record in one or more of the following, or a combination:

a. Presentation of papers at conferences, workshops, etc.

b. Service as a contributing member, committee chair, or officer of an appropriate professional or scholarly association.

c. Publication of articles in appropriate journals.

3. Each successful candidate must show evidence of a continuing record of responsible academic citizenship appropriate to the candidate's area.

C. Promotion from Associate Professor to Professor

To merit promotion to the rank of Professor, candidates must possess a strong record of performance at the rank of Associate Professor.

1. A successful candidate must present convincing evidence of outstanding performance and effectiveness as a librarian; each candidate's record must be judged sufficiently consistent in quality to warrant the expectation of continued performance at this level.

The candidate should provide evidence of setting a standard for excellence in librarianship.

2. A successful candidate must present an outstanding record of productive research, publication, creative activity, and scholarly achievement appropriate to his/her discipline and fields of specialization; this record must be sufficiently consistent in both quantity and quality to warrant the expectation of continued performance at this level.

The Faculty Handbook provides many examples of appropriate types of scholarly and professional contributions (p. 24). Contributions at this rank should be at the national or international level. The candidate should provide evidence of an outstanding record in one or more of the following, or a combination:

a. Presentation of papers at conferences, workshops, etc.

b. Service as a contributing member, committee chair, or officer of an appropriate professional or scholarly association.

c. Publication of articles in appropriate journals.

3. Each successful candidate must show evidence of a continuing record of responsible academic citizenship appropriate to the candidate's area.

TIMELINE FOR PROMOTION AND TENURE, 1994/95

July 18-August 5	Potential candidate initiates discussion with immediate supervisor concerning promotion. If decision is made to apply for promotion, candidate supplies supervisor with list of references by Friday, August 5, and notifies personnel officer of intent to apply for promotion. The department head is responsible for soliciting letters of reference. According to the **Faculty Handbook** (p. 34), "The candidate for promotion can terminate the review process at any stage by requesting that his or her dossier be withdrawn from consideration." Tenure review candidates in the 4th and 6th years of review may supply department heads with list of references by Friday, August 5.
By July 31	Tenure workshop conducted.
August 22	Promotion dossier of candidate who reports to a unit head submitted by candidate to unit head. Unit head may add information to the dossier that he/she considers relevant, and adds letter of recommendation; unit head informs candidate of any additions to dossier and sends copy of letter to candidate by Tuesday, August 30. Candidate may send explanatory or rebuttal material to unit head by Friday, September 2, to be added to the dossier. Tenure review dossier of candidate who reports to unit head submitted by candidate to unit head. Unit head may add information to the dossier that he/she considers relevant, and adds letter of recommendation; unit head informs candidate of any additions to dossier, and sends copy of letter of recommendation to candidate by Tuesday, August 30. Candidate may send explanatory or rebuttal material to unit head by Friday, September 2, to be added to the dossier.
September 6	Promotion dossiers submitted by unit head to department head for review; promotion dossier of candidate who reports to department head submitted by candidate to department head. Department head adds letter of recommendation and sends copy of letter to candidate by Friday, September 16. Candidate may send explanatory or rebuttal material to department head by Wednesday, September 21, to be added to the dossier. Promotion dossier of candidate who reports to associate/assistant dean submitted to associate/assistant dean. Associate/assistant dean adds independent letter of recommendation and sends copy of letter

to candidate by Friday, September 16. Candidate may send explanatory or rebuttal material to associate/assistant dean by Wednesday, September 21, to be added to the dossier.

Tenure review dossiers submitted by unit head to department head for review; tenure review dossier of candidate who reports to department head submitted by candidate to department head. Department head may add information to the dossier that he/she considers relevant, and adds letter of recommendation; department head informs candidate of any additions to dossier, and sends copy of letter of recommendation to candidate by Friday, September 16. Candidate may send explanatory or rebuttal material to department head by Wednesday, September 21, to be added to the dossier.

Tenure review dossier of candidate who reports to associate/assistant dean submitted to associate/assistant dean. Associate/assistant dean may add information to the dossier that he/she considers relevant, and adds independent letter of recommendation. Associate/assistant dean informs candidate of any additions to dossier and sends copy of letter of recommendation to candidate by Friday, September 16. Candidate may send explanatory or rebuttal material to department head by Wednesday, September 21, to be added to the dossier.

September 22

Promotion dossiers submitted by department head to Personnel Office. Personnel Office notifies chair of Promotion Review Committee, makes dossiers available to the Committee. Committee adds letter of recommendation to each dossier, with copy to candidate, by Friday, November 4. Candidate may send explanatory or rebuttal material to Personnel Office by Wednesday, November 9, to be added to the dossier.

Tenure dossiers submitted by department head to Personnel Office. Personnel Office makes dossiers available to Tenure Review Committee. Committee adds letter of recommendation to each dossier, with copy to candidate, by Friday, November 4. Candidate may send explanatory or rebuttal material to Personnel Office by Wednesday, November 9, to be added to the dossier.

November 10

Promotion dossiers not yet reviewed by associate/assistant deans submitted by Personnel Office to associate/assistant deans. Associate/assistant dean adds independent letter of recommendation to each dossier, by Wednesday, November 23. Candidate may send explanatory or rebuttal material to associate/assistant dean by Wednesday, November 30, to be added to the dossier.

Tenure dossiers not yet reviewed by associate/assistant deans

	submitted by Personnel Office to associate/assistant deans. Associate/assistant dean adds independent letter of recommendation to each dossier, with copy to candidate, by Wednesday, November 23. Candidate may send explanatory or rebuttal material to associate/assistant dean by Wednesday, November 30, to be added to the dossier.
December 1	Promotion dossiers submitted by associate/assistant deans and Personnel Office to Dean of Libraries. Dean adds independent letter of recommendation to each dossier, with copy to candidate and immediate supervisor, and submits dossiers to Personnel Office by Friday, January 13. Candidate may send explanatory or rebuttal material to the Dean by Wednesday, January 18, to be added to the dossier.
	Tenure dossiers submitted by associate/assistant deans and Personnel Office to Dean of Libraries. Dean adds independent letter of recommendation to each dossier, with copy to candidate and immediate supervisor, and submits dossiers to Personnel Office by Friday, January 13. Candidate may send explanatory or rebuttal material to the Dean by Wednesday, January 18, to be added to the dossier.
December 15	For the tenure review process, decision not to retain must be transmitted in writing by Dean of Libraries to probationary faculty second year tenure review candidates. Employment ends August 15, 1995.
By February 1	Promotion dossiers and tenure dossiers (4th and 6th years) submitted by Personnel Office to Office of Academic Affairs.
March 1	For tenure review process, decision not to retain must be transmitted in writing by Dean of Libraries to probationary first year tenure review candidates. Employment ends August 15, 1995.
March 15-April 15	Dean of Libraries notifies candidates of university decision on promotion.
	Notification of award of tenure occurs.
May 15 (end of academic year)	For tenure review process, all other decisions must be transmitted in writing by Dean of Libraries to candidate except Mandatory Decision Time (final tenure review), which will be transmitted in writing by the Academic Vice President to candidate.

Faculty who joined the Libraries after August 15, 1994 need not submit a dossier for a first year tenure review. The initial review will be their second year tenure review in fall 1995. The requirements of the first year review will be considered satisfied through the recruitment process.

DOCUMENTATION FOR PROMOTION

It is extremely important that each candidate for promotion prepare and present for evaluation a complete, well-organized, well-documented, and clear application file (dossier). A binder and dividers will be provided by the Libraries' personnel officer, together with the "Recommendation for Promotion" form. All work referred to in the dossier should be available upon request. **Review Section VI. Preparation of Dossiers; Subsequent Additions, pp.30-31, Faculty Handbook.**

Contents

1. Letter of Transmittal
   The letter of transmittal states that the dossier is provided by the candidate. It serves as a letter of permission by the candidate for the promotion committee and others to review the dossier.

2. Completed "Recommendation for Promotion" form.
   This is an application form provided by the University. Items 1-8 and 19 should be completed. Items 9-18 may be completed by stating "see curriculum vitae attached." Signatures will be added later in the process.

3. Dean's Promotion Recommendation
   Dean will add last, prior to sending dossier to Academic Affairs.

4. Assistant/Associate Dean's Promotion Recommendation (where applicable).
   In the case of promotion of a department head, submit promotion dossier to the assistant/associate dean. The letter from the assistant/associate dean will be submitted before the Promotion Committee considers the dossier. Otherwise, the recommendation is added after the Promotion Committee reviews the dossier.

5. Promotion Committee's Recommendation
   No other documentation may be added to the dossier after the committee has reviewed it.

6. Department Head's Promotion Recommendation (where applicable)

7. Unit Head's Promotion Recommendation (where applicable)

8. Current curriculum vitae
   The arrangement and format of the vitae (resume) is an individual decision. However, information should be arranged in a manner which allows the reader to assess the candidate's qualifications for promotion according to the U of A Faculty Handbook and the Libraries'

guidelines. The reader should be able to distinguish between publications which are invited, refereed, or non-refereed.

9. Promotion Support Correspondence

Letters from colleagues/evaluators should be requested. The letters serve as evidence of contributions in any of the areas in the promotion guidelines. Letters for candidates for promotion to Assistant Professor may be internal or external. Letters for other candidates should be primarily from outside the University community and should reflect national and regional involvement of the candidate. The number of letters is determined in part by the nature of the activities cited by the candidate. The request for these letters is initiated by the department head and should be returned to the department head for inclusion in the dossier. The department head is invited to use the form letter for requesting promotion support letters. A copy of the candidate's vitae should be enclosed with the request, together with a copy of the promotion guidelines. The evaluation letters are treated as confidential and will be added to the dossier without the candidate seeing them.

10. Summary Activity Report (OPTIONAL)

The report should include important professional milestones and may show the progression of responsibility, leadership, etc. since the last promotion.

11. Support Documentation

This section includes a representative sample of work drawn from publications since the last promotion. Include a copy of the title page and front matter of each monograph and a copy of each article. In the case of a presentation or other creative activity, provide appropriate pages from the program to show the scope and nature of the activity, if available. Other documentation may be included at the discretion of the candidate.

12. Letter of Appointment/Subsequent Promotion Recommendations

Specific salary information should be deleted. If the candidate has moved through the ranks at UA, a copy of formal promotion notification(s) should be included.

June 1994

Request for Promotion Support Letters

Date

Name
and
Address
block

Dear:

[Name] has applied for promotion to [Assistant or Associate] Professor at the University of Alabama. As part of the review process, letters are requested from individuals who may be knowledgeable about the candidate's work and contributions. We would appreciate your comments.

Candidates are evaluated on the quality of performance in three areas:

1. Effectiveness as a librarian.
2. Scholarly and professional contributions.
3. Responsible academic citizenship.

To assist you in the evaluation, we are enclosing a copy of [his/her] vitae, together with a copy of the Promotion Guidelines for the University of Alabama Libraries.

Please send your response directly to me at the following address:

[Name], Head
[xxx] Department
University of Alabama Libraries
Box 870266
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487-0266

We shall need to receive your response no later than September 1. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. I can be reached at (205) 348-xxxx.

Thank you for your time and effort in responding to our request.

Sincerely,

[Department Head]

Enclosures

Promotion Committee

The Promotion Committee shall be composed of all members of The Library Faculty who hold the academic rank of assistant professor or above, [exclusive of the dean, assistant/associate deans, and department heads,] regardless of tenure. Reviewing and voting eligibility of members shall be limited to those holding the academic rank or above of the proposed rank of the candidate for promotion. Each year the Committee shall elect from among its members a chair. The chair shall moderate at all meetings and shall be responsible for all correspondence of the Committee. The chair shall be a voting member of the Committee under the above voting criteria.
LFO Bylaws 5.

Suggested Promotion Committee Procedures

1. The personnel officer shall notify the chair of the Promotion Committee for the preceding year as soon as promotion dossiers have been received in the Personnel Office.

2. A promotion committee shall be formed for each rank for which there is a candidate, based on the list of eligible faculty provided by the personnel officer and the Faculty Handbook (see Chapter 2, Part V, *Composition of Faculty Committees for Appointments, Promotions, Progress Reviews, and Tenure*).

3. Eligible faculty should be familiar with the "Criteria and Standards for Promotion" adopted by the Libraries Faculty Organization.

4. All promotion committee proceedings are confidential.

5. The chair of the Promotion Committee shall call the initial meeting and notify eligible faculty. If more than one committee has been formed, the first meeting may be a joint meeting. If an eligible faculty member is not able to participate in the review process, he/she should provide a signed statement to that effect to the chair of the Promotion Committee prior to the first meeting. Those statements shall be retained in the Personnel Office.

6. The agenda for the first meeting should include the charge to the Promotion Committee and an explanation of the process, timeline, and other orientation. Discussion should include the need to allow sufficient time for the committee's letters of recommendation to be considered and rewritten if necessary, and signatures obtained.

7. The promotion committee for each rank shall elect a chair and set subsequent meeting times for consideration of candidates.

8. All participating faculty shall review pertinent dossiers prior to discussion meetings. Dossiers will remain in the administrative suite.

9. After discussion and consideration of each dossier, a vote shall be taken by secret ballot, the results tallied and announced at that time to the committee by the chair.

10. The chair shall then prepare a letter for each candidate, reflecting discussion and recommendation of the committee and indicating the specific outcome of the voting.

11. The letters may be held in the Personnel Office for signature and/or comment by each participating faculty member. Depending upon the comments from committee members, letters may need to be reworded or otherwise modified, and resubmitted for signature.

12. It is suggested that a signature line be prepared for each participating faculty member. If for some reason the faculty member is unavailable to sign the letter, the phrase "signature not available" shall be printed on the signature line.

13. When all signatures have been obtained, but no later than the due date stated in the timeline, the letter shall be turned over to the personnel officer who shall add the original to the dossier and send a copy to the candidate.

14. The chair shall notify committee members of any rebuttal letter received within three days, a copy of which may be read in the Personnel Office. The committee should meet to review the rebuttal, formulate a response and inform the candidate in writing (see Faculty Handbook).

June, 1994